

ARTISTIC HOME DECORATION



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GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN, U.S.A.

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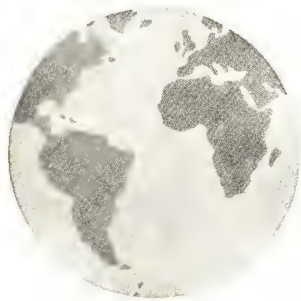
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Artistic Home Decoration

A Brief Treatise
On What is Required to Make a
Well Furnished Home and
How It May be
Secured



Issued by the
Home Decoration Department
THE ALABASTINE COMPANY
GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.
U. S. A.



This traditional colonial mahogany-and-white staircase, more correctly and pleasingly adapted to cream white and brown mahogany has wall tints that strike a harmonious medium between the two, made possible by combinations of ALABASTINE.

This harmony is emphasized by the gateleg table and the warm golden color of the lamp and shade, and brightened and made interesting by the blending softness of a grey-green carpet on floor and stairs that gives life and piquancy to the whole.

Ceiling and Cove, Alabastine No. 26. Walls, three parts No. 26 and one part No. 29.

Wall Decoration and Its Possibilities

ATTEMPTS at wall decoration date from the earliest history. They were man's first response to the inherent desire for the beautiful, and at first they were used with little or no regard for their fitness with their surroundings. As knowledge and education progressed, walls were seen to be an integral part of the whole scheme of room arrangement and decoration, and so were treated with greater care.

In early times this treatment was achieved by means of tapestries and other expensive materials which were within the reach of only the wealthier class. Later on, their use became more widespread, until some means of beautifying the walls of a room were at last available to everyone and bare walls became practically unknown.

This led to the devising of cheaper means of wall decoration, so that it became the endeavor of manufacturers to provide decorative materials so cheap that the minimum of beauty and durability was reached. For a time crude patterns and unsanitary wall coverings were in vogue, and in more modest homes walls were covered with flat tints which seldom had any relation to the furniture in the room. This condition may be accepted as the bottom of the descent from real beauty and harmony.

At a time when this tendency had reached its lowest ebb, the ALABASTINE Company sought a better means for applying the decoration direct to the walls themselves, just as many of the finest edifices of the world had once been decorated by master hands.

Finally a product was perfected and placed on the market by means of which the problem of direct wall decoration was



The dining room opens from the front hall shown on page two. It has for a floor covering a Wilton rug of the same soft grey-green as the hall. This rug fits well with the upholstery and the beautiful shield-backed Hepplewhite chairs. On the walls the color is softened and lightened, while bands of a deeper hue are used to give contrast and interest.

Ceiling and Cove, Alabastine No. 26. Wall Panels, No. 57 with bands in No. 64 and Wood Moulding one part No. 26 and one part No. 52.

solved. It was called ALABASTINE, and with the advent of this new medium, effects in harmony with the furnishings of the room were made available at a cost within the ready reach of everyone, so that there is no longer any excuse for wrinkled, torn or mutilated wall hangings or ill-chosen color effects.

With ALABASTINE, too, everyone can employ his own artistic instinct, using the almost illimitable color combinations furnished by this process of mural adornment.

For color is undoubtedly the outstanding element upon which home decoration depends, and the walls are the background against which all color schemes must be built.

It is with the purpose of discussing the principles upon which attractive wall adornment, colorful correctness, and good taste may go hand in hand, that this book is published.

The color plates reproduced herein will be of assistance in this proper application of color harmony, and as they are made direct from the furniture, fabrics, rugs and hangings shown in them, they may be depended upon fully.

The Principles of Color Harmony

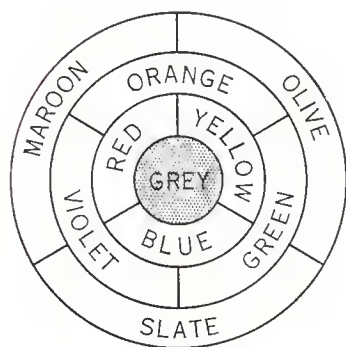
MORE unpardonable sins are committed in wall coverings than in any other decorative medium. And the whole basis, too, of color harmony begins with them. Walls should for that reason be of such subdued and unobtrusive character that they should never clamor for attention and the tint with which they are treated should be "greyed" or neutral, blending softly into their surroundings and restful to the eye.

Assuming then, that the color on the walls is the first consideration in planning the decoration of a room, we must have some knowledge of the principles on which color harmony is built.

If you were to take a box of paints and pick out the *red*, *blue* and *yellow*, you would find, by mixing them in various ways, that every known color is obtained from these three. That is why they are called the primary colors. By mixing all three you will have grey. By mixing yellow and red, you will have orange; blue and yellow will produce green; blue and red produce violet. Each of these secondary colors is complementary to the primary colors from which it is formed. These secondary colors, in turn, form other complementary combinations; orange and green form olive; green and violet produce slate; violet and orange make maroon; and these intermediate colors can be mixed in turn to form sage, tan and taupe and various other combinations.

If equal parts of a color and its complement are mixed, the result will be grey. If the proportions are unequal, the predominating color is "greyed" or neutralized, that is, *softened in tone*. This matter of greyed colors in connection with home deco-

ration is a most important one, for in interior decoration pure colors must be used sparingly, and the more a color is greyed, the larger amount of it can be used. Pure green is an impossible color for the walls of a room, but by being sufficiently "greyed" with its complement, red, it becomes softened into a pleasing "grey green" or sage green. A very small amount of pure red, such as a little vase, could be used in this room, but a greyed or dull red could be used in much larger amounts.



THE COMBINATION OF
COLORS

At the center of the diagram the combined primary colors, red, yellow and blue, form grey. In the outer circles red and yellow form orange, yellow and blue form green, green and orange create olive, and so ad infinitum.

Harmonious Color in Furnishings

COLOR being the outstanding factor in home decoration today and the color for the walls having been determined, the proper co-ordination of walls, ceiling, floors and furnishings is a necessity of the first order.

Expert advice is not always essential in any effort made to reflect taste, feeling and individuality in a room or a home, and the outlay of large sums is not always required. A little understanding of the styles of furniture made today, with a color scheme adopted as a guide to the selection of draperies and rugs goes a long way for the average person.

The problem of how to secure this harmony is uppermost. It must be done in most cases with materials already at hand and the question of how to attain it with those furnishings and accessories that you have gathered over a period of years is one that taxes one's resources to a most trying degree.

This is not so difficult if we remember that, having the main furniture in mind, the first important problem is the color scheme for the room and that furniture of a given type or a particular period is not a necessity.

The first necessity is that a definite color harmony be decided upon, following it in the rugs and fabrics, the walls, ceilings and floors, and pursuing it unflinchingly in the purchase of any new furniture or additional accessories.

When it comes to the matter of accessories such as mirrors, pictures, and candlesticks, a rearrangement of your present materials is often all that is required. When making new purchases, great freedom for personal taste is possible so long as the color harmony is maintained.



The hangings, accessories and upholstery have been chosen with the rug as key for the color scheme. The master stroke is the blending of these tones upon the walls by means of the ALABASTINE-OPALINE effect.

Ceiling and Cove of living room, Alabastine No. 26. Walls, No. 22 Alabastine for background; for the Opaline effect mix eight parts No. 22 and one part No. 2 for first color; and nine parts No. 22 and one part No. 8 for the second color. Nos. 2 and 8 are positive colors. Dining room ceiling, No. 26; dining room walls, equal parts of Nos. 28 and 31.

*Which Colors are
Warm and Which
are Cold?*

The colors of the spectrum from yellow, through orange and red to violet, are warm; while those from yellow, through green and blue, are cold. The former are usually more cheerful and you must consider this in decorating your rooms. For a room which has much sunshine it is best to choose from the cool side of the spectrum, —a greyed green, for instance. But a warmer color, such as buff—a greyed yellow—is better for a room with little sunshine. The whole subject is worth your study and experimentation and will have much to do with the success of your decorative plans.

Light and pale colors make a room seem larger; while dark and intense colors produce the opposite effect. You can make a small, poorly lighted room appear larger and sunny by putting a soft, light yellow on the walls.

*Proportions
of Rooms*

One of the problems a housewife faces in making a room attractive is that the room itself is likely to be too long, too narrow or too high, and she is often puzzled to find a way in which this effect can be obviated. Such faults can be materially remedied by placing a davenport or a long table across the room near one end, the arrangement of pictures to assist in correcting badly proportioned wall spaces, and the handling of corner spaces so that they will break the sense of angularity. In her efforts to soften these ugly lines, every woman has at times wrongly placed a straight-backed sofa, a long table or upright piano across a corner. A wing chair or a small round table is better; but the chair should have near it a reading stand and lamp, lest it seem outside the social center.

The room which is too high or too low can also be greatly improved by proper wall treatment. A drop ceiling of twelve

to eighteen inches with a picture molding affixed at the lower edge will effectively decrease the height; while high paneling or a suggestion of paneling through the use of strips of molding about three feet nine inches from the floor will greatly reduce the height. It is well to remember that all horizontal lines bring the ceiling down while vertical lines raise it up.

Another influence that has much to do with the effect of height or lack of it is the arrangement of molding in the form of panels. Narrow panels add greatly to the height of a room that is otherwise too low; while broad ones reduce its apparent loftiness. In either case the panels add greatly to the room's artistic appearance. If they are colored in the same tint as the wall, they give light and shadows which vary the color and the effect may be yet more strongly accentuated by using a modification of the color in which the walls are treated.

One of the first requirements for this is a survey of the rooms to be treated, such a survey to include the question of whether the room is high or low ceiling, whether it is sunny or dark, and the purpose for which it is to be used. These selections lead to colors based first of all upon the two general divisions of warm ones and cold ones.

For the Windows

Much of the artistic charm of a room depends on the window curtaining. It softens hard lines and breaks the monotony of flat surfaces. Velour adds warmth and richness, silk mellows the light, and gay cretonnes give coziness and cheer.

Neither price nor color need limit you in getting new things for the windows. There are damasks, velvets, friezes, brocades, brocatelles and reps, taffetas, satins and prints—the latter ranging all through machine-printed cretonnes, hand-printed

linens and cottons of English Georgian design, Victorian pattern and a wide variety of French Toile de Jouy conception. These beautiful colored textiles range in price from the lowest figures up. Muslin, voile, scrim, net, gauze, poplin and light weight silk are the standard casement materials. These are best hemstitched or finished with a simple edge. Elaborate patterns or trimmings for these simple materials are in bad taste.

The curtains may hang as stately as tapestry or may be swept back to tie back; but in the latter case do not drape them so that they spoil the straight window line.

Valances are strictly in favor. They lend themselves to any outline. The best way is to follow the pattern and you will discover that the designer expected you to do so and has provided a design to your hand.

*F*loor Coverings

A successful room owes much to the harmony between the floor and its covering. The carpet or rug should always remain a background for objects placed upon it and the floor covering should be plain or of subdued design. Small rugs of more decided color or design may be thrown over it where the room is suited to this treatment. Where this is done there should not be too great a contrast between the rugs and the floor, for a dark rug on a light floor is as bad as the reverse.

In the living room or dining room greater depth of color is desirable in rugs, draperies and furniture than is the case in bed rooms, which are usually light in effect. For this reason the dining room and living room floors should be darkened with stain and waxed. They should not be highly polished.

For downstairs, rugs are unquestionably the best, but they must be used with discrimination. Do not place too many in a



Softened bluish grey walls make a fitting background for the luscious coloring of this beautifully balanced, gay, livable room. Mulberry velvet over-curtains, candle shades and

Ceiling and Cove, Alabastine No. 26.



old rose bell rope all tone in with the bluish wall tints. The lively jade green in cushion, picture and lamp-base form contrasting color accents.

alls, two parts No. 65—one part No. 54.

room and, if possible, have some similarity of color, pattern and texture. Domestic rugs have reached a high standard; and Wiltons, either in small, two-toned patterns or plain with borders of deeper tints, lend themselves well to the desired decorative effect. In the bed rooms, Scotch wool, linen and old-fashioned braided or woven rag rugs are best.

*R*ooms
Reflect
Personality

Rooms, like people, have personalities. They reflect in a greater or lesser degree the characteristics of those who occupy them.

The dining room, due to the formal type of its furniture, is less personal in its atmosphere than any other room in the home. The living room with its books, the coziness of the open fire, the radio corner and the glow of the reading lamp invites and encourages sociable and intimate discussion.

Nowhere is the individuality of the occupant so apparent as in the bed room. Here may be displayed those intimate souvenirs, keepsakes and photographs which have little meaning to others—and here delicate pinks and pale blues may be used in a girl's room without hesitancy and the various personalities of other members of the household exploited in wall colors and furnishings, even to the bizarre and exaggerated loveliness of Mother Goose designs in the nursery.

*T*he Ideal
Wall Treatment

There is no one element around which this personality can be rallied so simply and so readily as the treatment of the walls—and through no medium can this be accomplished with such ease and at such small expense as through the use of ALABASTINE. This simple water color furnishes an almost inexhaustible variety of tints and color ef-

fects which can be applied to plastered walls, rough or smooth, to burlap, canvas or wood; can be put on over paint and is frequently applied over wall paper (particularly in places where the paper hides an uneven or badly surfaced wall), and can be applied by the housewife with the slightest possible expenditure of trouble and work.

ALABASTINE presents a durable and unfading surface, unchangeable except by the lodgement of smoke and dust.

What is Alabastine?

(Q) *What is Alabastine?*

(A) ALABASTINE is a high-grade water color for walls, made up to a uniform standard of quality. There is but one ALABASTINE, a standardized product, uniform and satisfying. It is *not* Kalsomine.

(Q) *Is Alabastine an Experiment?*

(A) ALABASTINE is a time-tried and accepted decorative medium. It has been satisfactorily used in more than a million homes and has been continuously on the market for nearly fifty years. It stands today as the first, best and only thoroughly reliable wall tint that can be economically and easily applied by the housewife herself.

(Q) *What are Kalsomines?*

(A) Kalsomine is a general term applied to innumerable products of varying merits — sold under coined and fanciful names and manufactured from various materials. The name Kalsomine carries with it absolutely no suggestion of quality or recognition of merit.



The walls of the master bedroom, if it has a northern or eastern exposure may be of a golden brown that brings with it a flood of sunlight. This one is a room whose color would make any man feel comfortably at home and would equally well please wife or guest should it be chosen for their rooms.

Wall Panels and Wood Moulding in Alabastine No. 20 with bands in No. 48. Ceiling and Cove Moulding in equal parts of white and No. 20.

- (Q) *Will Alabastine Fade or Rub Off?*
- (A) ALABASTINE is so made that it will not fade, and remains durable for an indefinite period. An alabastined wall can be cleaned with wall paper cleaner.
- (Q) *Does the Question of Mixing with Hot or Cold Water Constitute the Difference between Alabastine and Kalsomine?*
- (A) By no means. Some of the poorest Kalsomine mixtures are made so that they may be used with cold water.
- (Q) *What is the Comparative Cost of Alabastine and Other Methods of Wall Treatment?*
- (A) More artistic and lasting results can be obtained at less expense through the use of ALABASTINE than with any other material on the market.
- (Q) *Can Alabastine be Used on Other than Plastered Walls?*
- (A) ALABASTINE works perfectly over wall board, plaster board, or any other solid interior surface.
- (Q) *Can Alabastine Be Used Over A Painted Wall?*
- (A) Hundreds of tons of Alabastine are being used over painted walls. Where the walls cannot be satisfactorily washed, and the expense of repainting is not practicable, ALABASTINE covers them handsomely. Any grease, coal-soot or dirt should be sponged off before the ALABASTINE is applied.
- (Q) *Can Alabastine be Used over Papered Walls?*
- (A) It can be used on any paper which is solid on the wall. If figures contained in the wall paper design do not contain aniline colors and are not raised figures, ALABASTINE usually produces good results. On plain ingrain or cartridge paper, enameled or glazed paper, fine results can be obtained.

(Q) *Can Alabastine be used over Both Rough, Sand-finished and Trowel or Smooth-finished Walls?*

(A) Yes, walls may be left in the brown sand finish, floated down to what is known as a carpet float, then tinted or decorated in any way with ALABASTINE. If a perfectly smooth wall is desired, it is equally satisfactory.

(Q) *How Much Alabastine is Required to Do An Ordinary Sized Room?*

(A) A package of ALABASTINE, under favorable conditions will cover about 350 square feet of smooth, non-porous surface. An ordinary room requires from two to three packages.

The amount varies according to the condition of the wall. A smooth, non-porous wall requires much less than a rough, porous one.

(Q) *How Is Alabastine Prepared For Use?*

(A) The process is simple — you measure out four pints of cold water to a five-pound package of ALABASTINE. Mix half of this water with the dry ALABASTINE. Stir thoroughly and thin down by adding the remainder of the water. Mix larger or smaller quantities in proportion.

If it is winter and the walls are cold and damp, warm water may be used.

Do not make the mistake of *adding too much water*.

(Q) *Can Anyone Use Alabastine?*

(A) Anyone can use ALABASTINE. Where a decorator is not available, the home owner can do the work. Simple and complete instructions are given with every package. There are twenty tints and white, and by different combinations or intermixings, an endless variety of shades may be produced.

(Q) *How Can These Combinations Be Determined?*

(A) By mixing a small amount of the dry ALABASTINE in different proportions, wetting it up and rubbing it out on a piece of paper or wall until you get the exact shade you want. It will thus harmonize precisely with any interior furnishings desired.

Schools, Churches and Public Institutions

ALABASTINE has been most satisfactorily used for the decoration of thousands of churches, schools, theaters, hospitals and public institutions throughout the country.

Some of the most beautiful church auditoriums ever built have used ALABASTINE for decorative purposes, and congregations throughout the world are worshipping in churches whose walls bear ALABASTINE tints. Beautiful stencils of ecclesiastical design are produced by the ALABASTINE Company.

For schoolrooms the question of eye-strain is important. A study has therefore been made by experts of the ALABASTINE Company on the subject of badly colored schoolroom walls and their effect upon teachers' and pupils' eyes.

The proper colors for this have also been scientifically tested by the research departments of various universities and as a result of this research we recommend ALABASTINE Number 26 for ceiling and Number 52 for walls, or Number 26 for ceiling and Numbers 24 and 48 intermixed for walls.

Hospitals, too, find ALABASTINE useful. Its absolute sanitary perfection makes it highly desirable for use on hospital walls.

The Use of Stencils

We furnish stencils for room decoration. To secure these stencils cut the word ALABASTINE from the face of the package and send us two of these names and 15 cents in coin, to cover postage and packing, and select the stencil desired from the stencil book which we will supply you on request.

How to Use Stencils

In using stencils, carry very little color on the brush; otherwise the color will run, smearing the wall and ruining the work. Use strong ALABAS-



This child's room we have chosen to adorn this page takes a dainty, sun-kissed azure for its theme, and that his heart may get the fullest delight from the primitive colors that he loves, a dash of pale orange is added. The border on the curtains, the valance over the windows and the little armchair are all done in the same lovely chintz. To complete the childish pleasure, behold a Mother Goose ALABASTINE stencil between ceiling and wall!

Ceiling and Frieze, white or No. 26 Alabastine.
Wall in three parts No. 22 and one part No. 28.

TINE colors. They are put up in one pound packages. If your local dealer does not carry the color you want, he can order it for you and we will ship parcel post, postage prepaid.

If you will write us, the Home Betterment Department of the ALABASTINE Company will suggest color schemes and stencil patterns and supply you with detailed instructions.

Alabastine-Opaline

To those who in these days of color emphasis want something of variety, so that they need not be limited to plain walls, the ALABASTINE-OPALINE process provides a multi-colored, tiffanized effect that is deservedly popular and rapidly increasing in use. It consists of the usual ALABASTINE coat, applied with a brush, with a second or third color applied with a sponge. It is a very simple process and gives most attractive effects. Examples of it are shown on the walls of the living room on page eight.

Substitutes Will Not Do

Any paint store or hardware store with whom you deal can secure ALABASTINE. If they offer you something "just as good," do not accept it.

If you cannot get it from your local dealer, *order direct from us!* We will supply it at regular prices and pay the transportation charges for you. You need not be deprived of the superior advantages resulting from the use of ALABASTINE.

The ALABASTINE "Home Betterment Department"

If you desire help or information on any subject connected with wall decoration or interior furnishings, we invite you to communicate with our "Home Betterment Department."

In this Department we have information accumulated during the many years we have been employed in this work that will be of great help to you.

We suggest color schemes, supply sample cards and stencil books and provide information, advice and suggestions for any work you may have in hand for your home, school or church.

This service is given absolutely free to anyone writing to us about their decorative problems.

The ALABASTINE Company

Grand Rapids, Michigan

U. S. A.



Nothing could be cozier or brighter than a sloping-roof bedroom if it is properly treated. Here is a "stunning" effect of pale lilac walls, chintz-covered wicker chairs and ivory furniture that makes a wonderful room for young girls, or for a guest.

Ceiling in white Alabastine. Walls, five parts Alabastine No. 21—one part No. 23.

Testimonials

Margerum, Alabama

I used Alabastine on two rooms and am highly pleased. Alabastine is certainly O. K.
(Signed) G. G. MASON

Sacramento, California

The house was for sale a year. I sold it a few days after decorating for one thousand dollars more than I could get before. Everybody was pleased with it. Thanks.
(Signed) E. J. EASTMAN

Los Angeles, California

The little color card is exactly the color we wanted and I am glad that it will harmonize with the dark oak woodwork, for the rooms are large and it would take some time to do them over.

This is the first time I have ever asked for suggestions, but your promptness, courtesy and willingness have been greatly appreciated and I shall not hesitate to call on you again.

(Signed) F. W. SHELFORD

Chicago, Illinois

Have had splendid success with Alabastine. Like especially the soft velvety texture of the walls. Would accept no substitutes. Many thanks to you.

(Signed) (MRS.) T. QUILLINAN

Clinton, Connecticut

I like Alabastine very much. Am going to use it in every room in my house. It is much cheaper than paint and more sanitary than wall paper, especially where children are.

(Signed) (MRS.) LOUIS ESPOSITS

Yuma, Colorado, P. O.

Just to let you know what your letter with information etc. caused us to do. We have purchased *twenty-five packages* of Alabastine and we are very well satisfied. Until we heard from you we could not decide whether to get Alabastine or a cheaper preparation. Thanking you.

(Signed) A. M. DONALD

Council Bluffs, Iowa

We were so pleased with Alabastine and followed your splendid suggestions—we are particularly fond of the shades of tan for the dining and living rooms—the greys and rose for bedrooms. Thanking you so kindly.

(Signed) (MRS.) HENRY DUCIL

Milbank, South Dakota

I have enough samples of Alabastine for only one county,—would appreciate it if I could get a lot more. I need these right away. The women seem pleased to get these good suggestions for their club meetings.

(Signed) GLADYS E. THOMPSON

Home Demonstration Agent

Abita Springs, Louisiana

I have just completed two rooms in Alabastine and am more than pleased with the results. The ease with which Alabastine can be applied is wonderful, and the results that can be obtained by an amateur are gratifying.

Your stencils impressed me as being a very fine idea to give a finish to the job. I notice in your chart you speak of a "free stencil offer." Would you kindly inform me as to what this is, and give me particulars.

(Signed) REV. HERMAN BIELENBERG

Winston-Salem, N. C.

Allow me to thank you very kindly for the helpful samples and literature. I am quite sure I shall find it instructive and interesting to my students.

(Signed) (MISS) A. H. WASHINGTON

Director of Practice Teaching

Duluth, Minnesota

The Color Scheme Demonstrator and other literature you sent me is very helpful indeed in Interior Decorating work.

(Signed) CLOVER M. SABIN

Urban Home Demonstration Agent



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GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

